

JANUARY 2006

THE LATEST NEWS FROM TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA

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## A Note from the Secretary of the Interior

Dear Friends of Take Pride in America,

In 2001, when I was appointed Secretary of the Interior, I came to Washington with a vision of implementing a cooperative conservation philosophy in managing the public lands. One component of this philosophy is cooperation, which signifies the Department's emphasis on voluntary action, partnerships, collaborative work, and commitment to work with all partners to attain common conservation goals. Take Pride in America transforms this idea into an action. Because of your partnership, we are making great strides toward achieving this component of the cooperative conservation philosophy.



*Gale A. Norton, Secretary of the Interior*

The primary mission of Take Pride in America is to recruit, support, and recognize volunteers on public lands, and your commitment is imperative to continue engaging individuals and groups in this effort. As we enter the third year of operation under my leadership, I have confidence that with your support, this program will continue to grow and fulfill the vision the President had when he launched it under the USA Freedom Corps in 2003.

Thank you for your continued commitment to Take Pride in America and the maintenance and enhancement of America's natural and cultural treasures.

Sincerely,  
Gale A. Norton

### UP-COMING EVENTS

Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service  
January 16, 2006  
[www.mlkday.org](http://www.mlkday.org)

Great Backyard Bird Count  
February 17-20, 2006  
[www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc)

Great American Cleanup  
March 1 - May 31, 2006  
[www.kab.org](http://www.kab.org)

National Youth Service Day  
April 21-23, 2006  
[www.ysa.org/nysd](http://www.ysa.org/nysd)

Earth Day  
April 22, 2006

National Volunteer Week  
April 23-29, 2006  
[www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons/nvw](http://www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons/nvw)

## School Turns Volunteer Projects into Take Pride Projects



When **Hahira Middle School** in Georgia became a

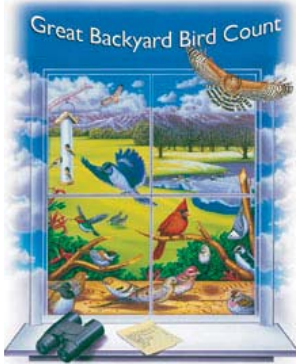
Take Pride School in October 2005, they saw an opportunity to turn their regularly scheduled volunteer projects into Take Pride projects.

In September 2005, the Hahira Middle School BETA Club went next door to build an outdoor reading area for the Hahira Public Library. Club members completed this community service project through a grant from Project

Learning Tree and the American Forest Federation. Two months later, the Parent Teacher Organization, along with employees of Lowe's, took pride in the middle school grounds by sprucing up the landscaping along the entrance of the school. The group trimmed shrubs, weeded and mulched flower beds, and planted accent plants with donated mulch and plants.

Thanks to Hahira Middle School for seizing an opportunity to 'Lend A Hand' in their community.

# The Great Backyard Bird Count—Every *birdy* Can Participate!



Celebrating its ninth season, the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) returns February 17-20, 2006. Each year, the National Audubon Society, a Take Pride Partner, and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology encourage people of all ages and all skill levels to step outside and count the species of birds in their community and report them to the GBBC website ([www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc)).

Whether tracking the birds in someone's backyard or receiving a report from a local wildlife refuge, the Audubon Society uses the information to monitor the ever-changing patterns of birds in winter and compare them to previous years' results. In 2005, participants submitted more than 52,000 checklists, reporting a record-breaking 613 species and counted more than 6 million birds.

Many bird enthusiasts use this as an opportunity to share their hobby with first-time bird watchers. Don McKee, a previous participant in Mississippi, said "The Great Backyard Bird Count gives folks an opportunity to reconnect with the natural world around them."

The GBBC encourages first time participants and youth of all ages, like Samantha Bradford from Waveland, Mississippi. "It was a fun, family adventure to explore the world of birds and learn about their natural habitat," she said.

*There's no need to pre-register, no fee and it's easy to participate.*

*Here's how you can learn more and volunteer:*

*1-Visit [www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc) for easy instructions and checklists for local species.*

*2-Count the birds in your backyard, park, or refuge—anywhere!*

*3-Report your results online.*



*A participant in the 2005 GBBC in Lake Nockamixon, Bucks Co., PA observes lakeside for birds.*

## PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

### Long Beach Residents Make New Year's Resolution – Cleaner Beaches



**CLEAN BEACHES COUNCIL**

On December 31, 2005, neither the threat of storm clouds nor the impending rain could keep dedicated Long Beach, California residents from their New Year's resolution - make Alamitos Beach a cleaner place for the new year. Armed with plastic bags and gloves, approximately 40 volunteers of all ages picked up cigarette butts, assorted plastics, styrofoam, and anything else they came across along the shoreline and surrounding areas of the beach removing bag after bag of trash and debris.

This Take Pride in America event was sponsored by the Clean Beaches Council, a Take Pride Charter Partner, with help from the City of Long Beach's Adopt-a-Beach program and the El Dorado Nature Center. The New Year's Eve clean up served as a precursor to the Clean Beaches Council's National Clean Beaches Week, held annually the last week of June.

In addition to the cleanup, the Clean Beaches Council and Take Pride in America recognized the City of Long Beach's Adopt-a-Beach program for their efforts to increase public responsibility and stewardship of public beaches. The Aquarium of the Pacific participated in the day's efforts and hosted a display table with resources on the aquarium and their volunteer efforts. Music for the event was provided by Jon Sherman and his solar powered sound system.



*Residents of Long Beach ring in the New Year helping restore Alamitos Beach.*

# 2006 Calendar of Nationwide Volunteer Days

## January 16, 2006

Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service

[www.mlkday.org](http://www.mlkday.org)

## February 17-20, 2006

Great Backyard Bird Count

[www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc)

## March 1-May 31, 2006

Great American Cleanup

[www.kab.org](http://www.kab.org)



*Volunteers plant shrubbery in Anchorage, AK during National Public Lands Day 2005.*

## April 21-23, 2006

National Youth Service Day

[www.ysa.org/nysd](http://www.ysa.org/nysd)

## April 22, 2006

Earth Day

<http://www.earthday.gov>

## April 23-29, 2006

National Volunteer Week

[www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons/nvw](http://www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons/nvw)

## April 28, 2006

National Arbor Day

[www.arboday.org](http://www.arboday.org)

## May 6, 2006

Join Hands Day

[www.joinhandsday.org](http://www.joinhandsday.org)

## May 13-20, 2006

National River Cleanup Week

[www.nationalrivercleanup.com](http://www.nationalrivercleanup.com)

## May 20-21, 2006

Good Sam Club's National Cleanup Day

[www.goodsamclub.com](http://www.goodsamclub.com)

## June 2006

Great Outdoors Month

[www.greatoutdoorsmonth.org](http://www.greatoutdoorsmonth.org)

## June 3, 2006

National Trails Day

[www.americanhiking.org/events/ntd](http://www.americanhiking.org/events/ntd)

## June 3-11, 2006

National Fishing and Boating Week

[www.nationalfishingandboatingweek.org](http://www.nationalfishingandboatingweek.org)

## June 12-16, 2006

Great Outdoors Week

[www.greatoutdoorsmonth.org](http://www.greatoutdoorsmonth.org)

## June 29 – July 6, 2006

National Clean Beaches Week

[www.cleanbeaches.org](http://www.cleanbeaches.org)

## September 16, 2006

International Coastal Cleanup Day

[www.coastalcleanup.org](http://www.coastalcleanup.org)

## September 30, 2006

National Public Lands Day

[www.publiclandsday.org](http://www.publiclandsday.org)

## October 18, 2006

World Water Monitoring Day

[www.worldwatermonitoringday.org](http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org)

## October 28, 2006

Make A Difference Day

<http://www.usaweekend.com/diff-day/>

## November 18, 2006

National Family Volunteer Day

<http://www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons/nfvd/>



*Bird enthusiasts count species at the Pawnee National Grassland, CO during the 2005 Great Backyard Bird Count.*



## BUREAU SPOTLIGHT

### Hats off to Don Hansen in his retirement



*Don Hansen accepts an award of appreciation at a ceremony in his honor in December 2005.*

Don Hansen has been a fixture with Take Pride in America since its inception - initially in 1985 and again when it was re-introduced in 2003. After 36 years of public service and more than a decade as the program manager for the Volunteers in the National Forests program within the U.S. Forest Service, Don is retiring and planning to enjoy a well-deserved change of pace. Don demonstrated how to appreciate a precious resource - America's public lands volunteers - and those of us who work with Don will miss his sense of humor and collaborative spirit. Don caps off his career having guided 82,000

volunteers nationwide to contribute more than 3.1 million hours to the U.S.F.S. in 2005. Take Pride salutes Don's service to America and congratulates him on his retirement.

### Public Service ANNOUNCEMENTS!!!

Look for YOUR public lands to be popping up in some unexpected places this month! Publications like National Geographic Adventure, Harper's Bazaar and Child Magazine are scheduled to feature the Take Pride print PSA campaign, as well as RV specific magazines, like Road Trip! Magazine and Explore Pennsylvania, a publication of the Pennsylvania RV & Camping Association.

### Coming Soon!



### Applications for 2006 National Awards

Look for the application for the 2006 Take Pride National Awards to be posted on our website later this month. There are twelve categories of awards and all Take Pride events are eligible to be nominated. The Awards Ceremony will be in September 2006 in Washington, DC.

### Attention Girl Scouts: 2006 Grants Now Available from Linking Girls to the Lands Council



These grants encourage Girl Scouts across the country to develop collaborative projects with Federal natural resource agencies. Projects will offer Girl Scouts opportunities to participate in environmental education, volunteer conservation service, and/or outdoor skills development. Projects also provide opportunities for girls to learn about environmental, science, and natural resource career options. Grants of up to \$2,500 are available and applications are due Jan. 27, 2006. For more information or to download an application, visit [www.epa.gov/linkinggirls](http://www.epa.gov/linkinggirls).

*\*In areas where there are no federal natural resource agencies available, state natural resource agencies may serve as collaborative partners.*

### For Your Information

If you would like our Take Pride Volunteer Guides or plastic banners for your next event, simply email us the quantity and we will send them to you. To view a copy of the Guide online visit [http://www.takepride.info/volguide/doj\\_volguide.pdf](http://www.takepride.info/volguide/doj_volguide.pdf)

Please continue to send us your photos and write-ups of your Take Pride in America events! An event evaluation form can be found on the homepage of our website at [www.TakePride.gov](http://www.TakePride.gov).

Email [takepride@ios.doi.gov](mailto:takepride@ios.doi.gov) if you have information for our newsletter, or if you have questions.

### Thank you...

Thanks to our contributors for this edition of "In Touch With Take Pride." Please keep sending us articles for future editions.

Sincerely,  
Take Pride Staff